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ADDRESS

OF THE

Executive Committee St. Louis Immigration Society,

TO THE

State Immigration Convention.

RESULTS OF THE CONVENTION.

THE PLANS AND PURPOSES

OF THE

ST. LOUIS SOCIETY.

1880.



ST. LOUIS.

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1880.

OFFICE ST. LOUIS IMMIGRATION SOCIETY,

ST. LOUIS, MAY 19, 1880.

To the Members of the State Immigration Convention :

GENTLEMEN.—The State Immigration Convention has met and adjourned. In itself the Convention was a success—successful beyond the most sanguine expectations of its originators. It was the largest body of representative Missourians ever assembled. They came from every section, from every county of the State, to make known and publish to the world the advantages of their respective localities.

They came to prove that, whatever may have been true of Missouri in times gone by, her people now extend the hand of fellowship, and will give a hearty, whole-souled welcome to all who wish to cast their lot among them, and cordially invite foreign capital and labor to come to their State and aid in the development of its wonderful resources.

All this the Convention has done. It has shown that our own people now fully realize the importance of encouraging immigration, and that a laudable spirit of emulation has been aroused in the different sections, each striving to outdo the others in efforts to add to the population and wealth of the State. It has demonstrated that, however laggard Missouri may have been in the past, she will, in the future, keep step with the progress of the age. With one accord her whole people have risen up and come together to prove how much they and their State have been misrepresented and misunderstood, and to repel slanders which have turned the tide of immigration from this grand commonwealth to other less favored States. They have shown that the heritage which God has given them is unequalled in its munificence, and they have given assurance, which cannot be doubted, that they are not only willing but anxious that the people of other climes should come to enjoy that heritage with them.

The object and purpose of the Convention and its extraordinary composition have been widely published, and have been the subject of conversation and newspaper comment, not alone in all parts of our own country, but in those countries in Europe from which the stream of emigration flows. Missouri has but to be known, and the true spirit of her people understood, to insure an increase of population and wealth unparalleled in history, and by this movement the State has been advertised as it never was before.

Should our efforts stop here, the result would probably be as favorable and important to the State as anything that has been heretofore done for it.

But our work is not half done. The proceedings of the Convention were interesting, and might, perhaps, have been made more so to those present by giving free rein to personal discussion and debate. The Convention however was not called for the mere entertainment of its members, but for the enlightenment of the public, at home and abroad. The object was to collect facts and useful statistical information in regard to the State, which we could, with pride, submit to the whole world. This object was fully attained. More than fifty distinguished citizens and experts prepared and presented to the Convention elaborate and exhaustive articles on almost every subject material to the interests of the State. In addition, the several counties, through their delegates, presented reports giving detailed descriptions of their respective counties. In these we have an acquisition simply invaluable. They present an array of facts, and show agricultural, mineral and manufacturing capabilities that will astonish our own best informed citizens.

We are now engaged in compiling these very valuable papers, and shall publish them in the most attractive form. We hope and expect to produce a work that will be as much superior to any similar production published by any other State as our materials are better. A description of each county of the State, setting forth every fact on which one in search of a home for any purpose would desire information, will be published, with a carefully prepared map of the county.

The preparation of this work has been intrusted to our secretary, E. C. Cabell, and his assistant, Morrison Renshaw, under the general supervision of our committee on publication, Thos. W. Fitch, Waldo P. Johnson, Thos. C. Fletcher, Chas. P. Johnson, Richard D. Lancaster and E. C. Cabell.

Much time must necessarily elapse before such a work, worthy of the subject and satisfactory to ourselves, can be completed. But this delay will not be without some compensating advantage. The taking of the United States census is now in progress, and we shall be able to avail ourselves of advanced information from this source to give the latest and most correct report of the resources of the State.

This work, completed in the manner and in the style we propose, will be perhaps of greater practical importance to the State than any heretofore published. We shall spare no pains to make it valuable and attractive, and shall take measures to insure for it a wide circulation.

In concluding, we beg you to pardon a brief reference to ourselves. The Executive Committee of the St. Louis Immigration Society, having immediate charge of the affairs of the association, are all citizens of St. Louis. None of

us have any purpose to subserve except the promotion of the public good. There is among us no element of political party bias, and this was carefully excluded from the convention. But while we are citizens of St. Louis, the movement we inaugurated was for the special and immediate benefit of the State at large. We felt that the growth and prosperity of our city depended on the prosperity of the country tributary to it, and particularly of our own State. To increase the population, to build up interior cities and towns, to promote local manufacturing enterprises, to open the mines, and otherwise to develop the country, will be to build up St. Louis. We are therefore greatly interested in the material advancement of every county in the State. If the counties grow rich and prosper, so will our city increase in wealth and prosperity. Between town and country there is no conflict of interest. One is dependent on the other. Without the country our city would not be, and every farmer in the State is interested in the growth of St. Louis. It is destined to become the great commercial capital of the Mississippi Valley, and perhaps the largest city in the world. It is, or will be, the market and distributing point for all the surrounding country. But this can only be through the prosperity of the country around it, and hence our efforts to add to the population and in every way to secure the development of the resources of the counties. That insured the grandest predictions of the future of St. Louis will be realized.

We congratulate you on the success which has thus far attended this movement. That success justifies the hope that, by earnest, persistent, united effort, we may "place Missouri where she should be—first in rank among the States of the Western Empire."

THOMAS W. FITCH,
CHARLES P. JOHNSON,
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WALDO P. JOHNSON,

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